

The Difference between Buddhist Enlightenment and Advaita Enlightenment

(I am republishing an answer that I wrote in Quora for the question ‘What is the difference between Buddhist enlightenment and Advaita enlightenment?’)

If you are in a prison and want to escape from the prison, you can do it in many ways:

- 1) You can break the walls and escape.
- 2) You can climb the wall and escape from it.
- 3) You can attack a guard in the prison, put on his dress, deceive others and somehow try to escape from the prison.

Once you have come out of the prison, you feel liberated. Is there any difference in the feeling of liberation based on how you escaped from the prison?

If you fall in love with someone, you would say to that person, ‘I love you’. A Frenchman would say ‘je t’aime’; A German would say ‘ich liebe dich’. A Spanish guy would say ‘te amo’. Is there any difference in the love based on the way it is said?

What they call as Nirvana in Buddhism and what they call as Moksha in Vedanta are one and the same. The methodology, the approach and the terminology used may be different. But the liberation is the same.

Enlightenment is nothing but liberating yourself from the prison of clinging to the mind and the body and deriving your identity from it. As long as you are just body and mind, you are limited. Once that identification is completely destroyed, you are boundless. Then you are beyond all dualities.

I have written two blog posts explaining why Buddhism and Vedanta are one and the same:

[Buddhism and Vedanta are the Same – A Detailed Comparison](#)

[Which Philosophy Personally Appeals More to You, Buddhism or Advaita Vedanta?](#)

I recently wrote a book titled ‘[The Truth About Spiritual Enlightenment: Bridging Science, Buddhism and Advaita Vedanta](#)’ in which I have put together the essence of the ancient teachings, how they evolved historically and what psychology says about certain principles that are exactly the same as what these traditions say.

Enlightenment is the destruction of the distinction between the observer and the observed. But the first step lies in clearly understanding the distinction between the two. In the process of understanding it, you would intentionally, clearly and correctly discriminate between the observer and the observed. The final step is the merger of the two. When the observer, the observed and the act of observing all become one, the duality disappears. This is enlightenment. And, this is the same regardless of where the guidance comes from and how you are guided.